

**LEAD4CHANGE STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM  
INDEPENDENT EVALUATION  
2018-2019  
FINAL REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Lead4Change Student Leadership Program (formerly called Lead2Feed) was created in 2012 by The Foundation for Impact on Literacy and Learning (FILL) and the Lift a Life Novak Family Foundation. The Program’s overarching goal is to help middle and high school students (6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> graders) reach their full potentials through leadership skill development training and community projects focused on specific areas such as collaboration and self-reflection. The Program includes robust leadership lessons organized as a curriculum that can be integrated into any subject area and all class and club settings (e.g., Family, Career and Community Leaders of America), and a standard framework for project-based community service experiences. The lessons are based on leadership principles and draw heavily on Co-Founder, Former Chairman and CEO of Yum! Brands David Novak’s book, *Taking People With You*. The Program is implemented under the guidance of a teacher or club advisor. It is available at no cost to schools and youth-serving organizations. Since 2012 1.5 million students and more than 8,000 educators have been involved in the Program.

In 2016 The Foundation for Impact on Literacy and Learning engaged High Impact Partnering to conduct initial planning activities related to evaluation of the then Lead2Feed Student Leadership Program: reviewing existing data, interviewing key stakeholders about evaluation needs, surveying a sample of current participants, and reading information about community projects in response to the annual national Challenge competition. High Impact Partnering is a consulting firm headquartered in New York City with more than 30 years of experience conducting national and local evaluations of programs for children and youth ([highimpactpartnering.com](http://highimpactpartnering.com)). The report resulting from the planning activities summarized what was known from data about the Program, and made recommendations regarding the creation of a Program database and the type of Program evaluation that was needed to meet the stakeholders’ needs and field’s expectations. In 2018 FILL contracted with High Impact Partnering to conduct an independent national evaluation of the Program. What follows is the final report of the national evaluation.

**Key Questions Addressed in the National Evaluation**

- 1. Do the Lead4Change Program participants significantly increase their self-assessments of skills in key outcome areas of leadership such as self-efficacy, perspective-taking, self-confidence, management, and teamwork from the beginning to the end of the Program?**

## **2. Do the Lead4Change Program participants increase their self-appraisals in the key outcome areas of leadership significantly more than comparison students from the same schools who do not participate in the program?**

The evaluation did not investigate issues related to the Program's implementation, the longer-term outcomes associated with participation or other possible topics. It should be viewed as an initial study of the Program's effects.

### **NATIONAL EVALUATION DESIGN**

A mixed design was used for the evaluation that included:

- Pre- and post-Program contrasts of changes in self-assessments of the key outcome areas of leadership for middle- and high-school students who participate in the Lead4Change Program; and
- Participant and comparison group contrasts of changes in self-assessments in the key outcome areas of leadership over the Program period.

Participants are students who receive the full Lead4Change curriculum and engage in related community service activities. The comparison group is comprised of students from the same schools who do not receive the curriculum and engage in the community service activities. Random assignment was not possible for this evaluation for several main reasons, most importantly the enrollment processes already underway in the collaborating schools.

Measures: pre- and post- Program surveys (at start and end of the Program) self-administered by the participants and comparison group students. Included in the surveys are questions regarding demographics and educational aspirations; and nationally recognized measures of self-efficacy, life effectiveness, and other leadership skills. The nationally recognized measures include the *Life Effectiveness Questionnaire* (Neill, <http://www.wilderdom.com/leq.html>), the *Leadership Practices Inventory* (Kouzes & Posner, [www.leadershipchallenge.com/professionals-section-lpi.aspx](http://www.leadershipchallenge.com/professionals-section-lpi.aspx)), and *General Self-Efficacy Scale* (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, [http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~health/self/selfeff\\_public.htm](http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~health/self/selfeff_public.htm)). These measures were selected because of their relevance to the Program curriculum's content. The pre- and post- Program surveys, relevant citations, and other information relevant to the design are included in the Appendix.

### **DATA ANALYSES**

Data analyses began with the identification of 10 key factors or dimensions from the 78 individual item scores in the nationally recognized instruments. The 10 factors with notations of the number of items included in each factor are displayed in the following figure. The factors were named by the High Impact Partnering evaluators for the content of the items that contributed strongly. Definitions of the factors are included with the findings in this report and in the Appendix. The individual items that comprise each of the factors also are displayed in the Appendix. Using composite factors provides stronger outcome measures of specific behavioral

dimensions than the individual item scores taken alone. All 10 factors are very strong and stable based on statistical tests that indicate the interrelationships of the individual items included in each factor.



Analyses followed using the 10 factors in pre- and post- participant group contrasts and participant and comparison group contrasts. Changes over the program period in the total scores on three nationally recognized instruments used for the surveys also were examined. Finally, additional analyses were carried out to determine based on the available information which participants benefitted most from the Program.

The .05 level of statistical significance was used as the cut-off for meaningful findings. The probability of findings with significance levels at the .05 level occurring by chance alone is five

out of 100. The .01 level of statistical significance is even more rigorous with the probability of the findings occurring by chance alone being one out of 100. The analyses of the Lead4Change data yielded a number of statistically significant findings. It should be noted that identifying many significant findings at the .05 level and beyond in educational and social science research are not easy to achieve or typically found.

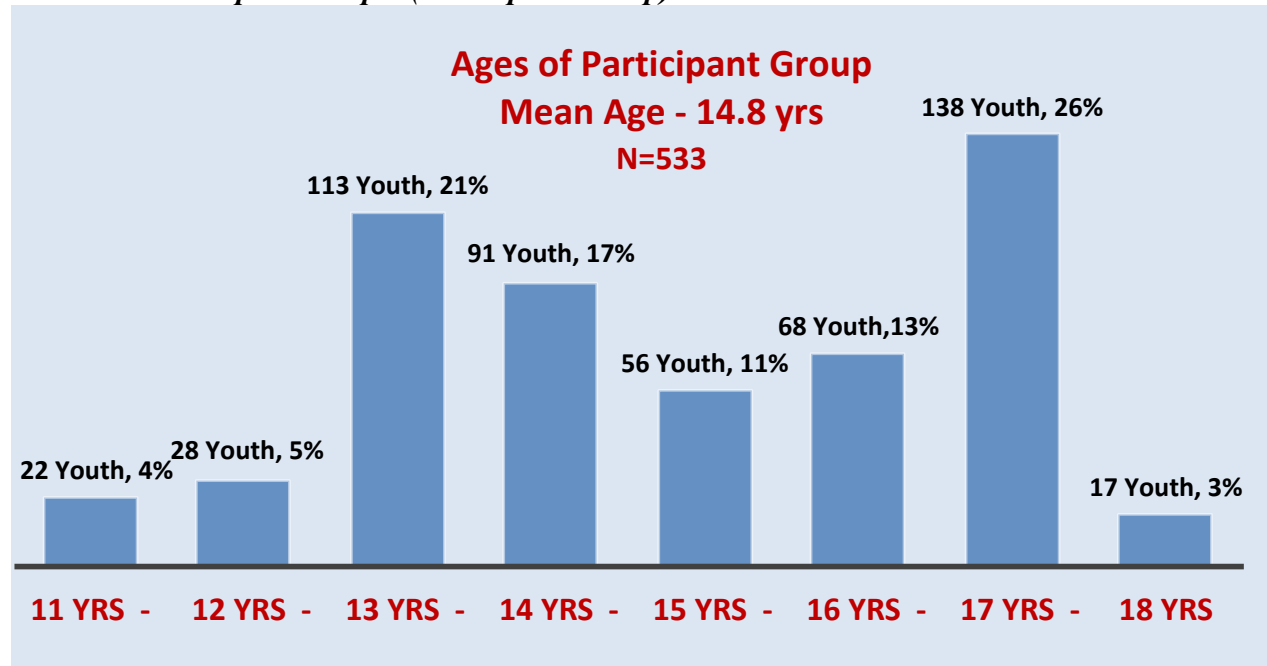
**THE SAMPLES**

Two samples were used for the evaluation:

- A sample of all 455 participants from eight school sites across the United States using the Lead4Change curriculum and service activities. The sites were two middle schools and six high schools in urban and suburban locations.
- A matched sample of 208 participants and 78 comparison group students from two of the eight sites (one suburban middle school and one urban high school) where the comparison subgroups were adequate for desired analyses, and the participant and comparison groups were well matched on demographics with one exception. That exception was age with the comparison students being one year younger than the participants at the middle school and two years younger than the participants at the high school. In these two schools the Lead4Change program is offered only to older students.

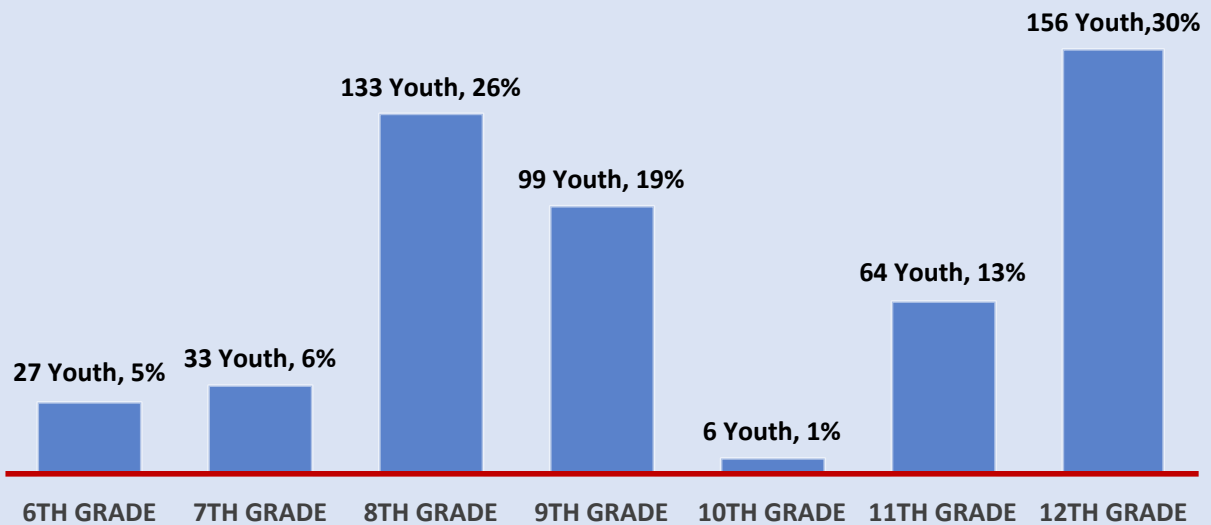
Tables displaying the demographics of the total participant sample and matched sample follow. The total numbers vary across the tables given some missing information, as noted particularly on race/ethnicity.

***The Total Participant Sample (Participant Group)***



## Grade in School - Participant Group

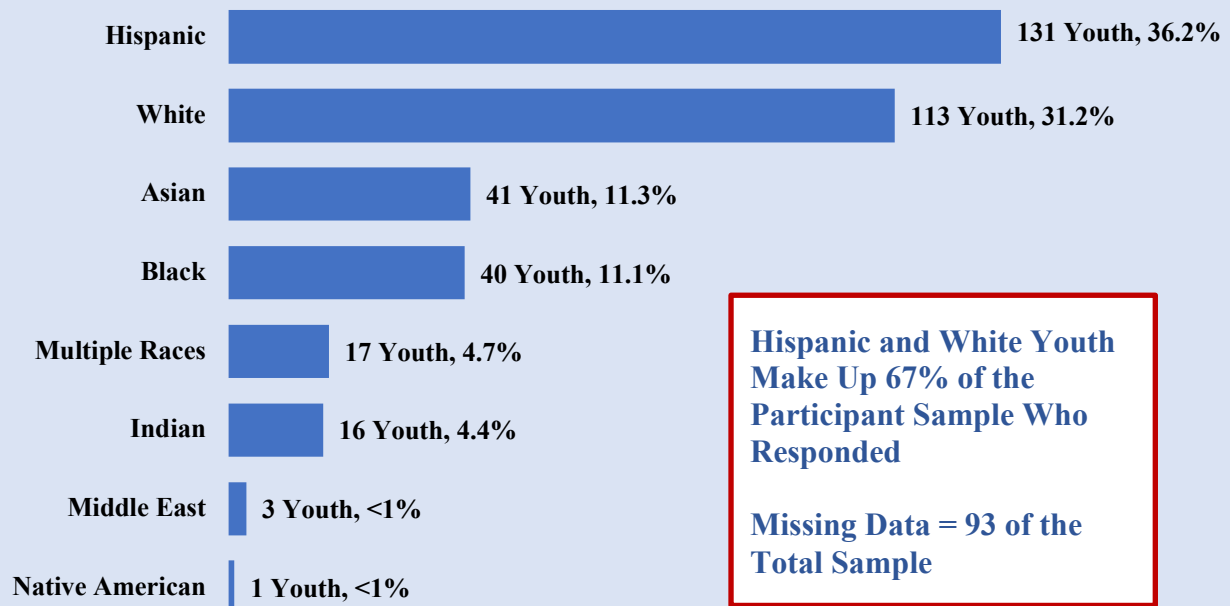
N=518



Data on race/ethnicity were missing for substantial proportions of the two samples. Many students do not want to answer this question. Some believe the typical answer categories are not appropriate for them. This situation is common in much current educational research using self-reporting.

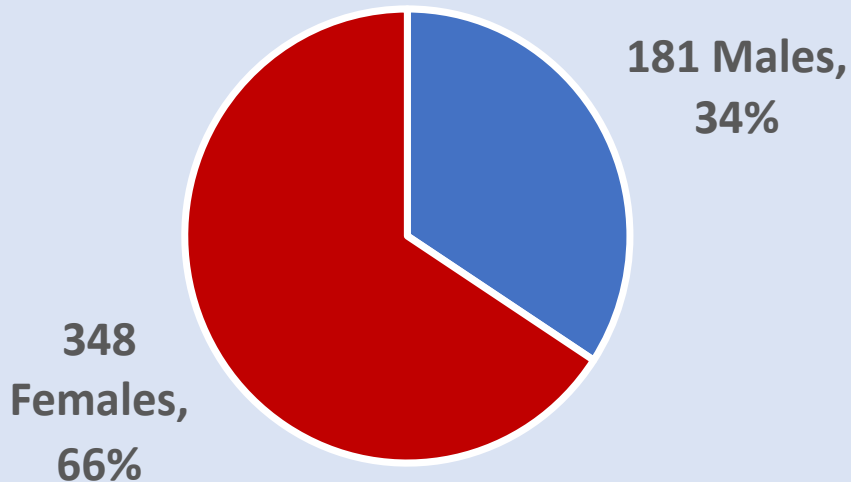
## Race / Ethnicity - Participant Group

N=362



## Gender of Participants - All Sites

N=529

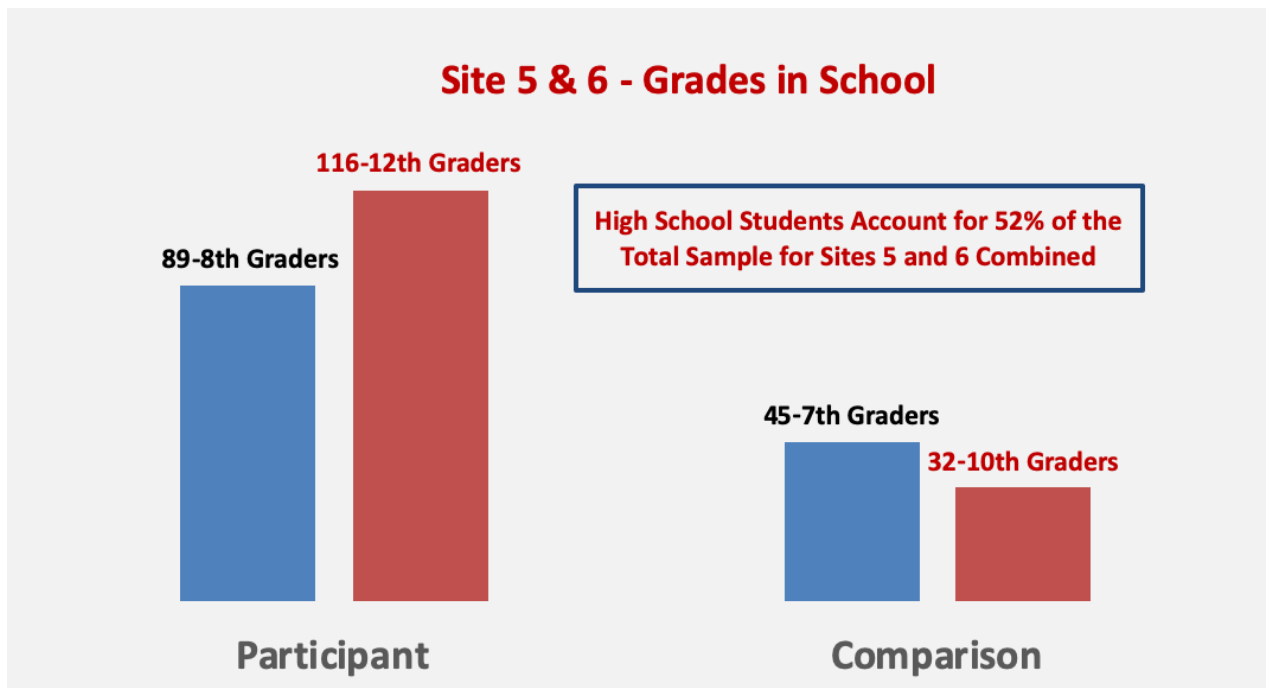
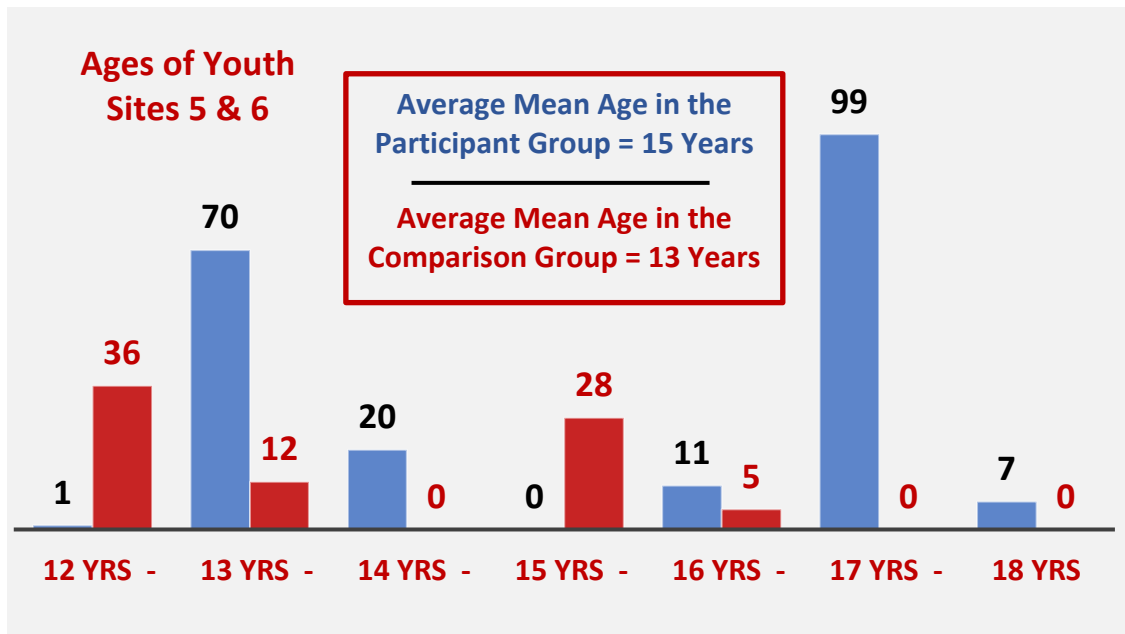


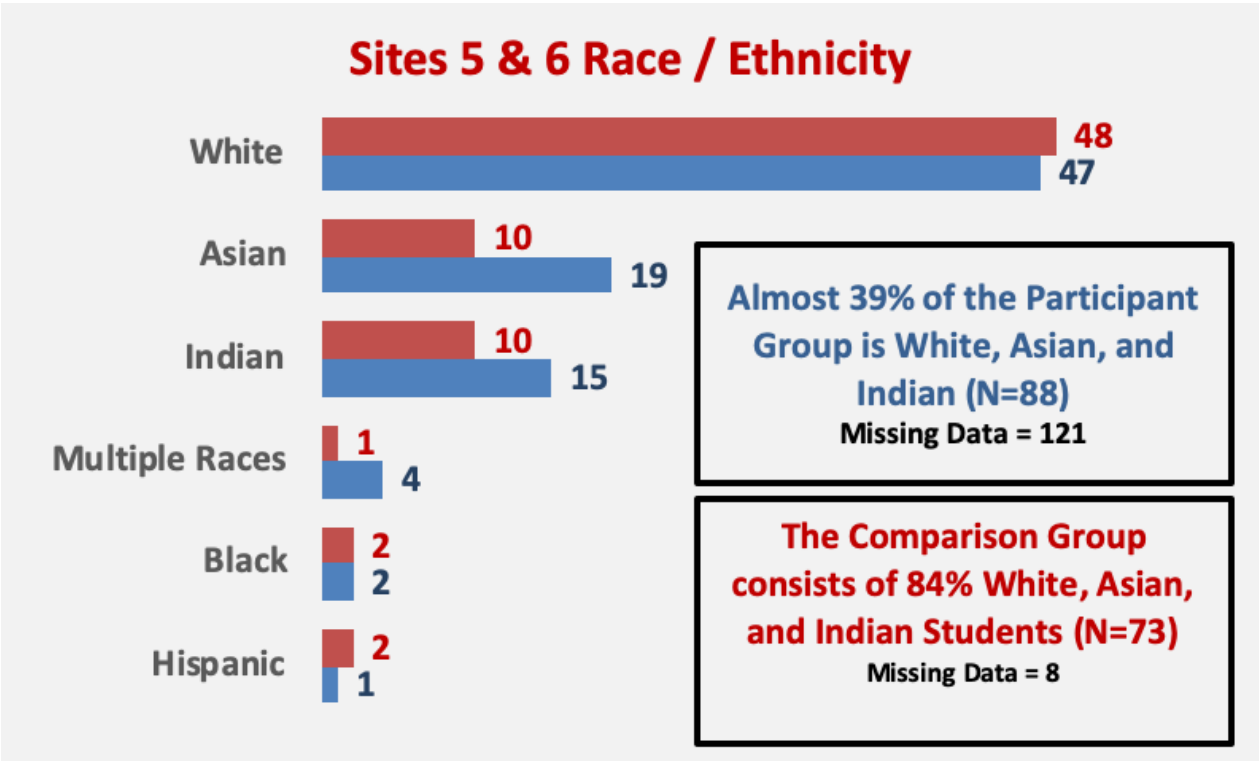
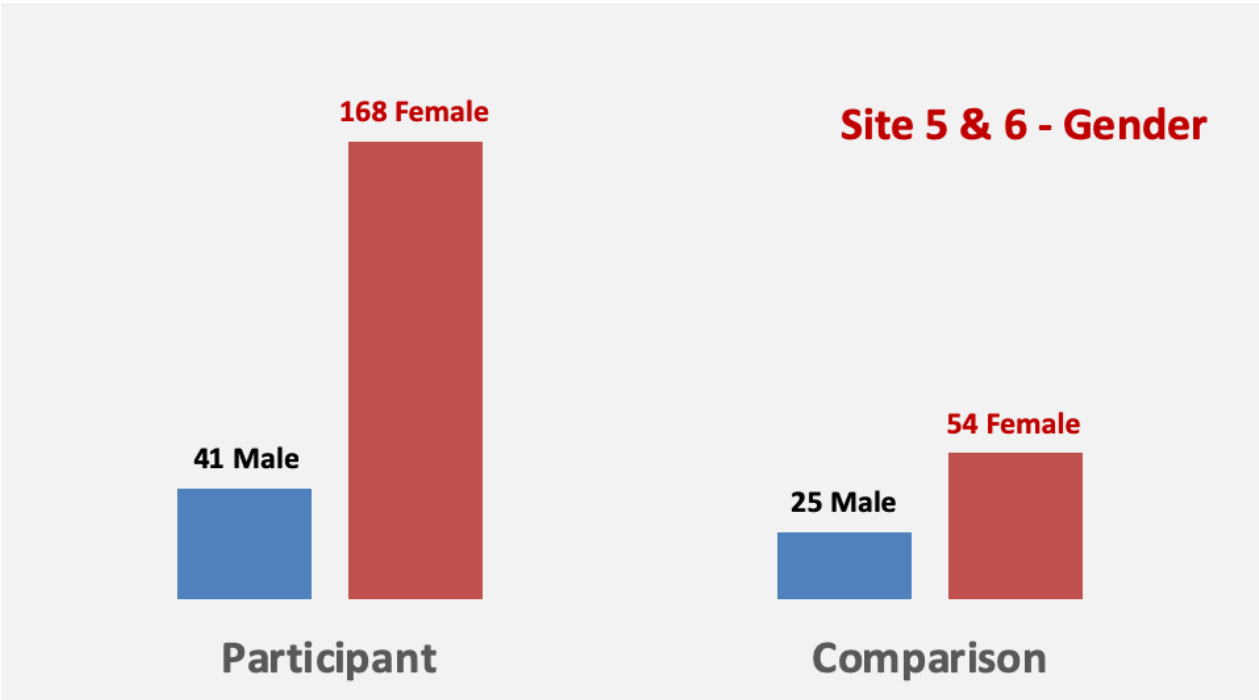
The participants were asked in the surveys about their last grades for Math and English and their plans for education after high school. Fifty percent reported that had received As and 29% indicated that they received Bs in Math for the grading period prior to the start of the Program. Sixty percent said that had received As and 26% indicated that they received Bs in English for this period.

Forty-one percent (41%) of the participants reported at the start of the Program that they planned to attend a four-year-college or university and another 38% indicated at this time that they wanted to attend a four-year college and graduate school.

Given the lack of variability in these responses, very limited changes in the participants' answers over the Program period, and the fact that the Program does not attest to influence these outcomes, further analyses with these data were not conducted.

*The Matched Sample (Participants and Comparisons) (labeled as Sites 5 & 6)*



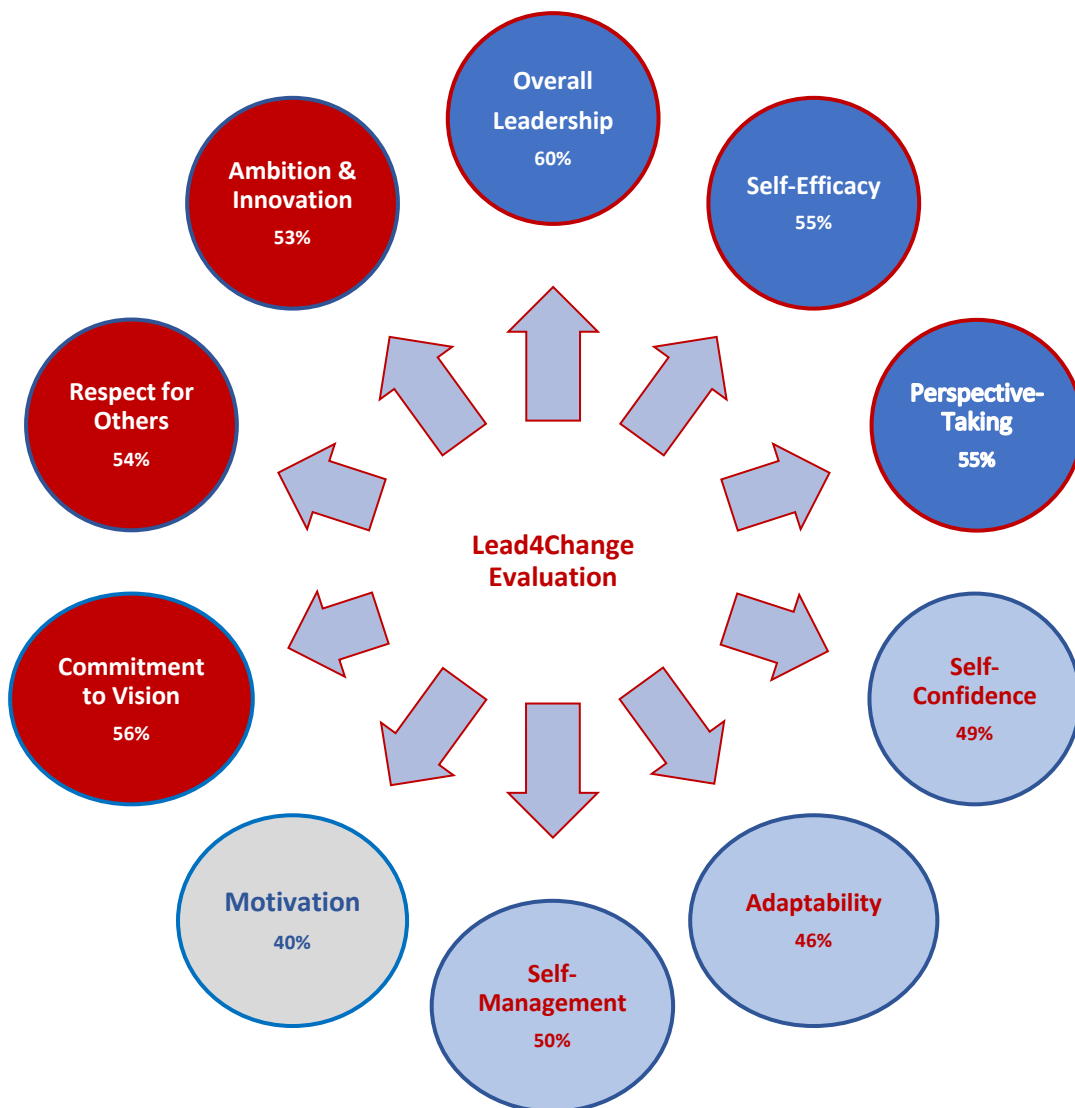




**KEY FINDINGS FOR THE TOTAL PARTICIPANT SAMPLE – ANSWERS TO THE FIRST KEY EVALUATION QUESTION**

**Percentages of the Total Participant Sample Showing Increases on the Factors**

**Forty-percent (40%) or more of the total participant sample showed increases on each of the 10 factors investigated.** The next table displays the percentages with increases for the individual factors. Definitions of the individual factors follow.



### ***Definitions of the Factors***

Overall Leadership	General ability to engage, motivate, and guide others to achieve goals resulting in desired changes
Self-Efficacy	Capacity to use one's knowledge and skills to develop solutions and deal with challenges including opportunities and adversity
Perspective-Taking	Ability to understand situations from the point of view of another
Self-Confidence	Perception as having the abilities to succeed and achieve
Adaptability	Capacity to be open and flexibility to new ideas
Self-Management	Ability to stay calm and overcome anxiety when changes occur
Motivation	Skilled at inspiring others with shared vision and commitment
Commitment to Vision	Demonstrates conviction about the meaning and purpose of the effort including aspirations
Respect for Others	Treats other people with dignity and acceptance
Ambition & Innovation	Seeks out challenges and new solutions

### **Significant Differences on the Factor Scores**

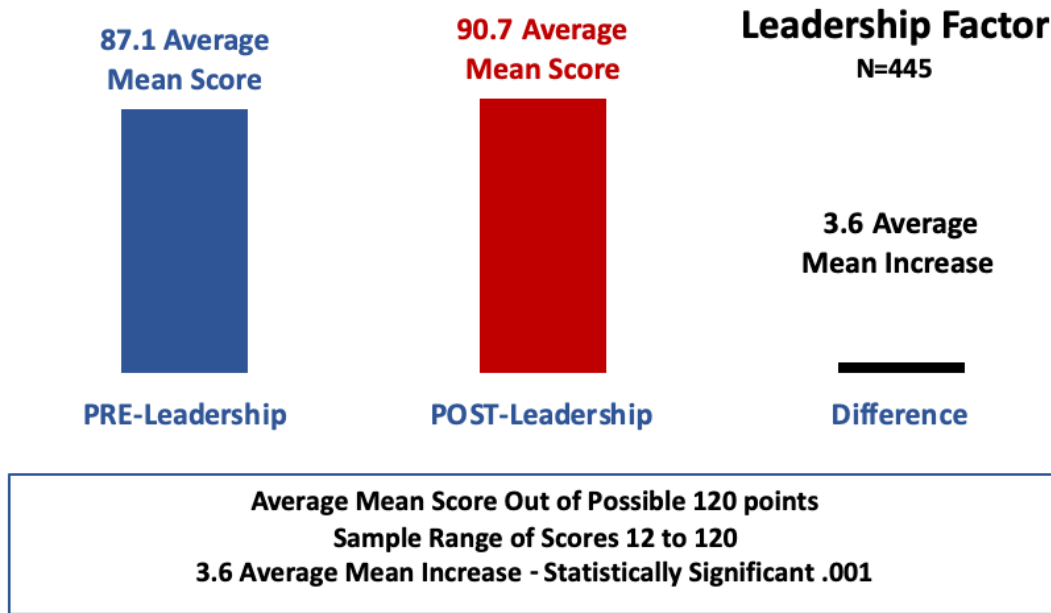
**The total sample, 455 participants from eight school sites across the United States, showed statistically significant positive changes on six of 10 factors. The six factors are: Overall Leadership, Self-Efficacy, Perspective-Taking, Self-Management, Commitment to Vision, and Ambition & Innovation.** These factors were developed from the many survey items to which the participants responded and reflect the major constructs of leadership development and social emotional learning. With one exception (Motivation), the significance levels for the changes on the other four factors were not very close to the desired level of .05: Self-Confidence (.36), Adaptability (.44), Motivation (.10), and Respect for Others (.16).

**The next six tables show the participants' mean (average) pre- and post- scores on the factor scales where significant changes were found and the possible ranges of the scale scores.** The possible ranges of the scale scores vary because the number of items included and ratings differs on the different scales. **The tables also display the mean changes on the scales from the start to the end of the program and the statistically significance of those changes. It is important to note that many of the mean increases were significant at levels well beyond the .05 level. The percentage changes on the total scales that the mean changes represent are included. On average, the participants evidenced moderately high ratings on the scales from the start.**

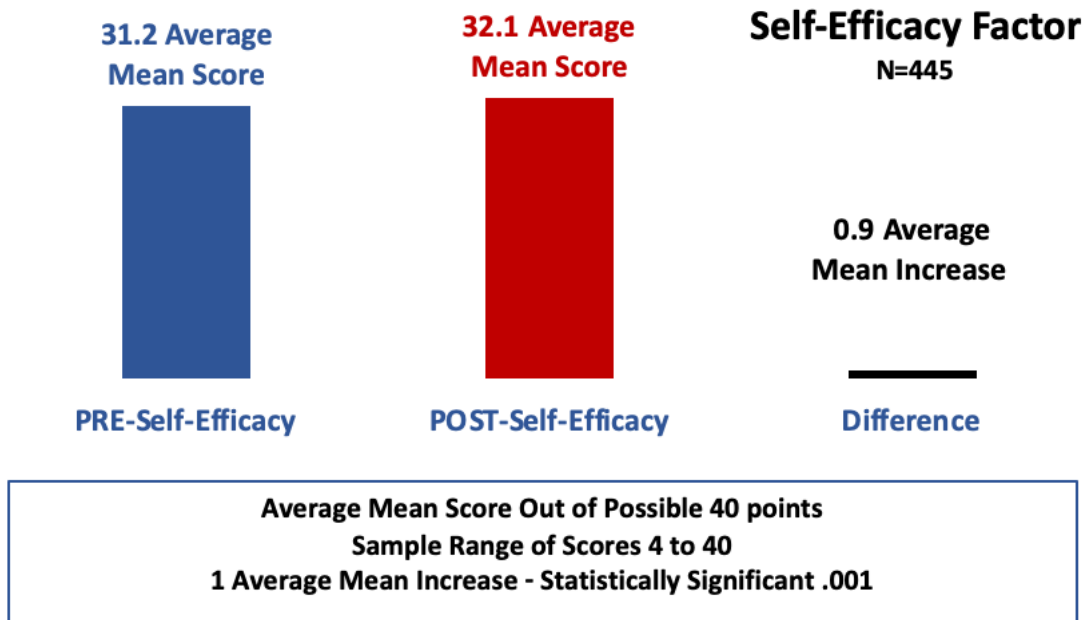
### **Effect Sizes of the Increases on the Factor Scales**

In addition to looking at the statistical significance levels of the mean increases on the different factor scales, the evaluators also calculated the effect sizes of the increases. The resulting metrics provide indications of the magnitudes of the changes (how important they are), the amount of variance explained by the intervention. An effect sizes of .2 is considered relatively small yet meaningful; .5 is considered medium, and .8 is considered large. The effect sizes on the gains of the six factor scales where significant changes for the participants were identified ranged from

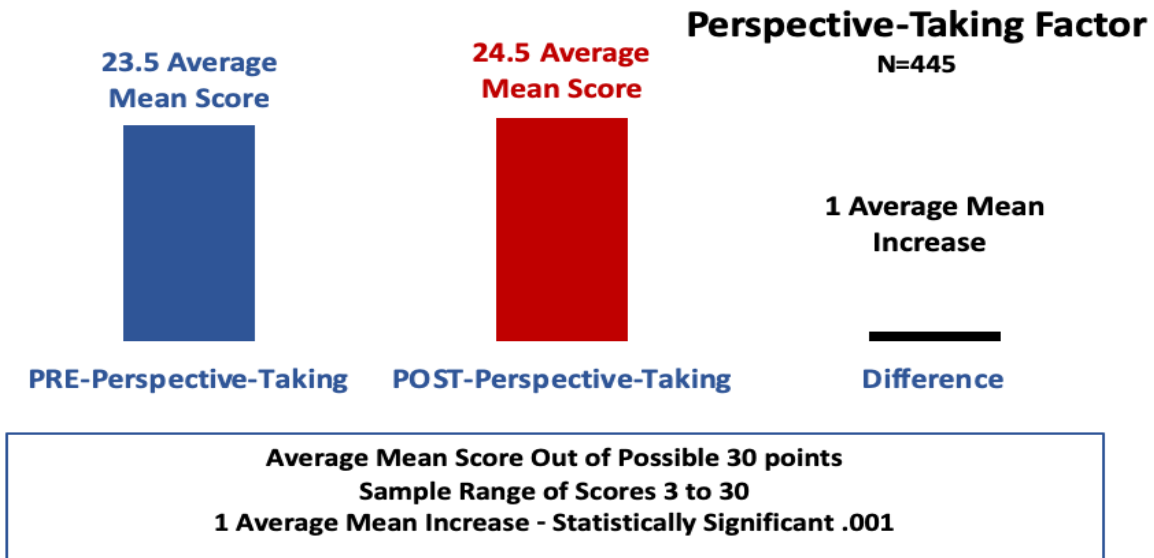
.13 to .28 and are noted in each table. Although considered relatively small changes, the fact that there are six such changes is noteworthy and welcomed given the limited intensity of the Program.



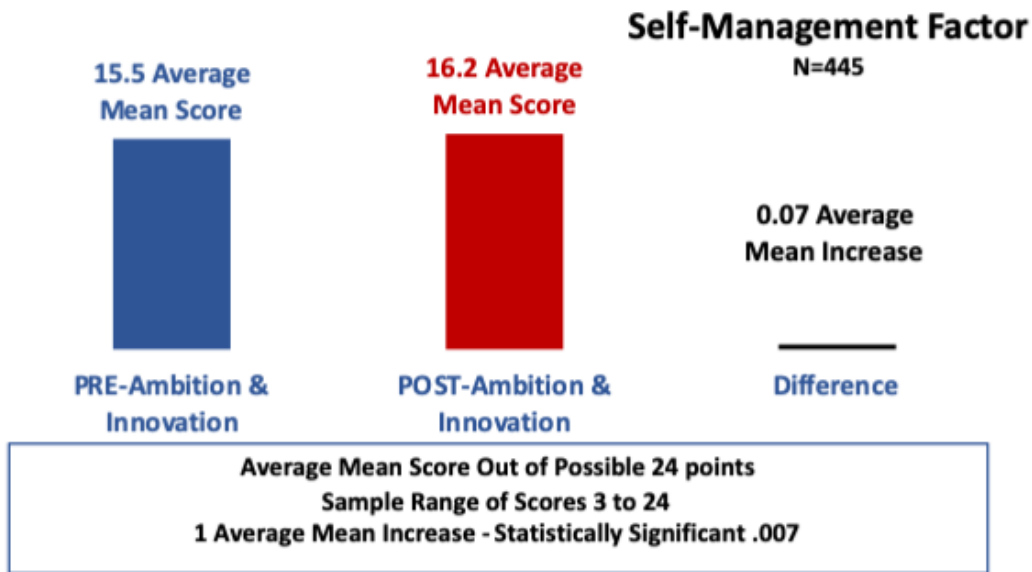
**On the Overall Leadership Factor, participants' average scores increased from 72.6% to 75.6% on the total scale from the start to the end of the Program, a 3.0% change. The effect size of the change on this factor was .28. Sixty-percent of the sample increased their scores on this factor.**



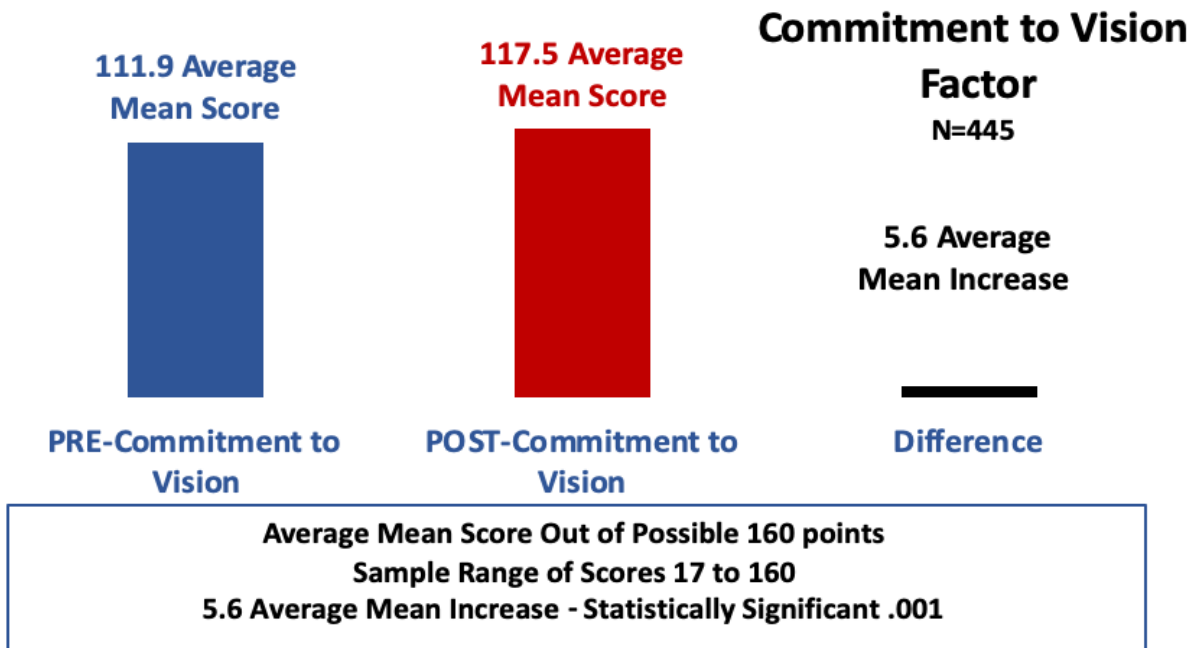
On the Self-Efficacy Factor, participants' average scores increased from 78.0% to 80.3% on the total scale from the start to the end of the Program, a 2.3% change. The effect size was .17. Fifty-five percent of the sample increased their scores on this factor.



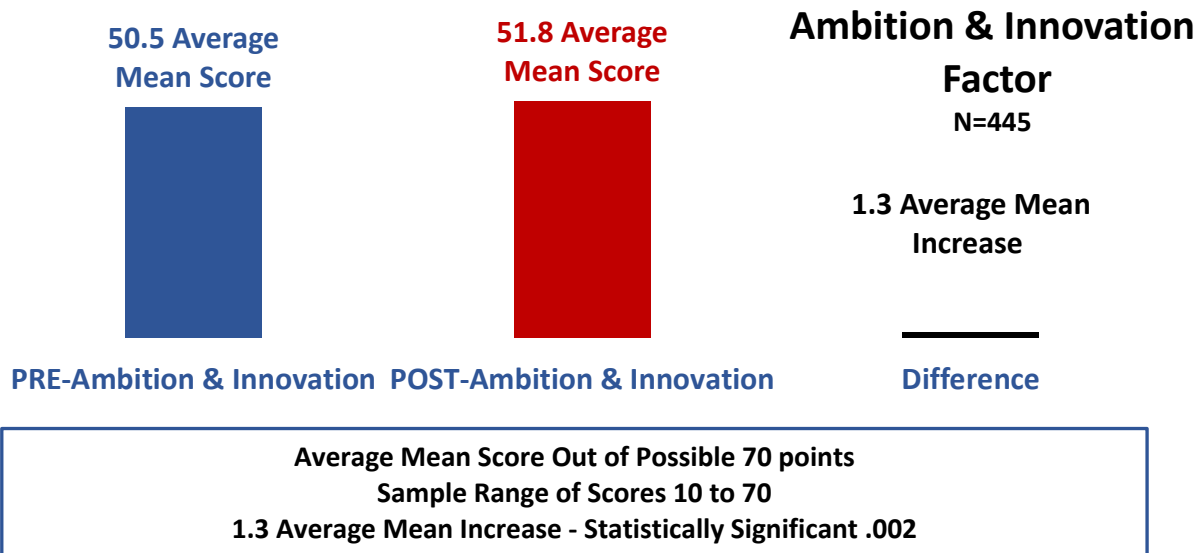
On the Perspective-Taking Factor, participants' average scores increased from 78.3% to 81.7% on the total scale from the start to the end of the Program, a 3.4% change. The effect size was .22. Fifty-five percent of the sample increased their scores on this factor.



On the Self-Management Factor, participants' average scores increased from 64.5% to 67.5% on the total scale from the start to the end of the Program, a 3.0% change. The effect size was .13. Fifty percent of the sample increased their scores on this factor.



On the Commitment to Vision Factor, participants' average scores increased from 69.9% to 73.4% on the total scale from the start to the end of the Program, a 3.5% change. The effect size was .24. Fifty-six percent of the sample increased their scores on this factor.



**On the Ambition & Innovation Factor, participants’ average scores increased from 72.1% to 74.0% on the total scale from the start to the end of the Program, a 1.9% change. The effect size is .15. Fifty-three percent of the sample increased their scores on this factor.**

**The percentages of participants evidencing some positive changes on the four other factors on which the participants’ changes were not statistically significant also is worth noting again: Self-Confidence (49%), Adaptability (46%), Motivation (40%), and Respect for Others (54%).**

### **Changes in the Factor Scores - Relationships With Age and Other Independent Variables**

Significant relationships between the changes in three of the six factor scores and participants’ age were found. On the Overall Leadership Factor scale, younger participants showed greater changes. On the Respect for Others Factor and Ambition & Innovation Factor scales, the older participants evidenced more changes. There were no other significant differences between the factor scores and independent variables.

### **Changes in the Aggregate Scores on the Three Nationally Recognized Instruments**

Changes in the participants’ total scores on the three nationally recognized instruments: the *Life Effectiveness Questionnaire*, the *Leadership Practices Inventory*, and *General Self-Efficacy Scale*, used in the surveys also were investigated. Change scores on the *Leadership Practices Inventory* total score were significant at the .05 level. This finding confirms that Program participants are making meaningful changes in their self-assessments and attitudes about overall leadership. The changes on the total scores for the other two measures were not statistically significant. **The participants showed changes in all but three of the 78 items included in the three instruments with sizable changes on 27 of the 78.**

## Who Benefits Most from Program Participation

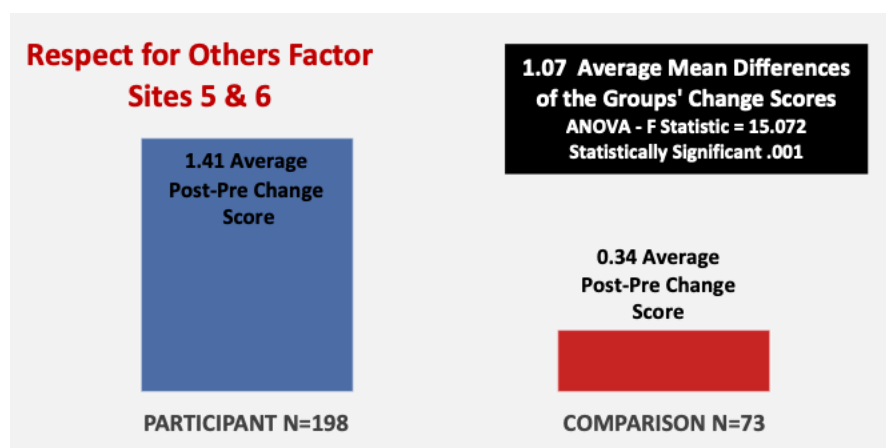
Based on the available information, it appears that younger students and those with lower scores at the start of the Program benefit most from Program participation. These participants also have the most potential for change given the scoring format on the surveys. These findings are consistent across the factors and the three instruments used.

### KEY FINDINGS FOR THE MATCHED SAMPLE OF PARTICIPANTS AND COMPARISONS - ANSWERS TO THE SECOND KEY EVALUATION QUESTION

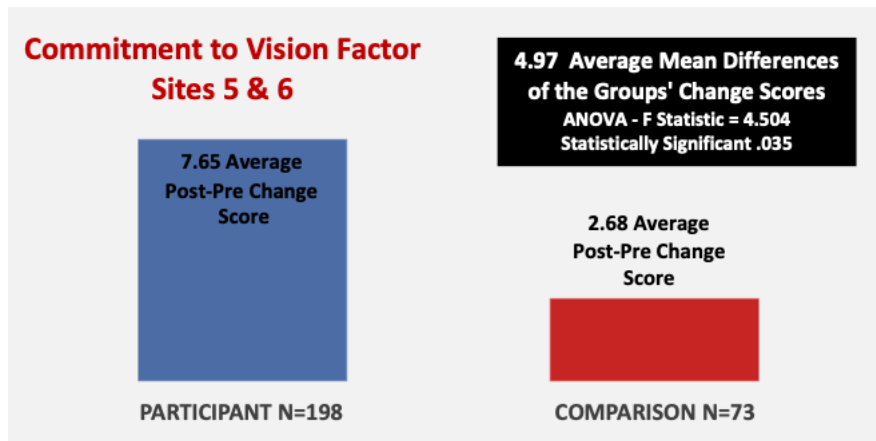
#### Significant Differences on the Factor Change Scores

For the Matched Sample (middle school and high school sites combined), participants had significantly greater change scores from the start to the end of the Program than the comparisons on two of the 10 factors: **Respect for Others (.001)** and **Commitment to Vision (.035)**. The participant-comparison contrasts are assessing the differences of the groups' change scores not only progress from the start to the end of the program period. The differences on the other factor change scores did not reach or come close to the .05 desired level of statistical significance.

The next tables show the participants' and comparison students' average pre-post change scores on the Respect for Others and Commitment to Vision factors. The tables also display the mean differences of the two groups' change scores from the start to the end of the program and the statistical significance and effect sizes of the differences, and the percentage changes on the total scales that the mean differences represent. In addition, the percentages of the matched subsamples of participants and comparisons showing positive changes are provided.



**On the Respect for Others Factor, the participants' average pre-post change score of 1.41 represented a 2% increase on the total scale from the start to the end of the Program while the comparisons' average pre-post change score of .34 represented a .48% increase. The effect size for the Respect for Others factor was .14. Fifty-eight percent of the participant group (58%) showed positive changes on this factor while 52% of the comparison did.**



**On the Commitment to Vision Factor, the participants' average pre-post change score of 7.65 represented a 4.8% increase on the total scale from the start to the end of the Program while the comparisons' average pre-post change score of 2.68 represented a 1.67% increase. The effect size for this factor was .23. Sixty-four percent of the participant group showed positive changes on this factor compared with 58% of the comparison group.**

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS**

The findings from this initial evaluation of the Lead4Change Student Leadership Program have implications for the implementation and expansion of the Program and related individual school, district, and broader education policies.

Participants of all types with varying pre-Program self-assessments of leadership and social emotional-learning skills and abilities report meaningful and substantial positive changes in a variety of development areas over the course of the Program. It appears that the Program may have benefits for all types of students, especially those who are younger and those with lower self-assessments. Participating in Lead4Change in school and other group settings may help younger and older adolescents focus on these development areas at important times with the guidance and practical experiences that the Program provides. A more rigorous investigation of participants versus non-participants shows significant differences between the two groups on two developmental areas: respect for others and commitment to vision, very important individual traits in adolescence and beyond.



Individual schools and districts have the opportunity to dedicate resources for the Program to all students or specific subgroups who may evidence even greater benefits depending on site objectives, needs, and capacity. Districts and states should consider the Program as part of their strategies to advance leadership development and social emotional learning.

## **DISCUSSION**

Moving forward, the ideal would be to conduct a randomized trial of the Program's implementation and effectiveness with a nationally representative sample. A more rigorous design would allow Lead4Change and others to have increased confidence about attributing the changes identified to the Program. However, it should be noted that such research is difficult to arrange in school settings with many other activities, operating processes and regulations, and costly to undertake with a sample of desirable size.

Another consideration for the future is the types of measures used. It would be advantageous to limit the reliance on students' self-reports and instead obtain direct observations or other measures of behavior such as individual students' responses to the leadership challenges of planning, team engagement, building, and motivation. That said, there are benefits to continued use of nationally recognized measures with established reliability and validity that pertain to the developmental constructs of focus. The latter may be further refined by Lead4Change with additional review and consideration of the finding from this evaluation. The curriculum lessons and participant-teacher/club leaders' training and interactions may be able to be enhanced to make the Program more effective and efficient.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The findings from High Impact Partnering's independent evaluation of the Lead4Change Student Leadership Program provide initial evidence for the benefits of the Program in terms of leadership skill development and social-emotional learning. Forty-percent (40%) or more of the total participant sample showed increases on each of the 10 factors investigated. Participants report significant gains over the Program period in six areas: Leadership, Self-Efficacy, Perspective-Taking, Self-Management, Commitment to Vision, and Ambition & Innovation. When contrasted with similar comparison students who did not receive the Program lessons and activities, participants showed significantly greater gains in two areas: Respect for Others and Commitment to Vision. These findings are encouraging and should be used to inform the Program's expansion and evaluation with even larger samples, and individual schools' and districts' decisions about selecting and implementing the Lead4Change Program.

## **APPENDIX**

For more information, contact [lead4change.org/contact-us](https://lead4change.org/contact-us).